



House Armed Services Committee

Global War on Terrorism Update

September 26, 2003

Iraq Update

- U.S. Marines handed control of Najaf, one of Shiite Islam's holiest cities, to a Spanish-led multinational force on Tuesday. The city was the site of a massive car bomb that killed 125 Iraqis, including a top Shiite cleric.
- Coalition air strikes killed an attacker early Tuesday after members of the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division came under fire near Fallujah, a town about 43 miles west of Baghdad. Coalition forces pursued the attackers into a building and set up a perimeter around it before calling in air support.

Of Note

- 31 nations have sent over 23,000 personnel to Iraq.
- 60 nations have made pledges or contributions totaling about \$1.5 billion.
- New site regarding the reconstruction of Iraq:
<http://www.iraq-today.com/>

Supplemental Notes

- Brave young Americans who liberated Iraq from the clutches of one of the bloodiest, most sadistic tyrants in modern history created the possibility of a major victory in the war on terrorism, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz told the House Armed Services Committee on Thursday.
- Completing this victory, he added, requires "winning the peace" as well. This is the "best way to honor the memories of the heroes who have sacrificed to bring us and the Iraqi people to this point. (We're) here today to ask Congress to give us the tools so we can finish the job."

Afghanistan Update

- U.S. warplanes supporting Afghan ground forces bombed Taliban positions in southern Afghanistan, in the mountains of Kandahar and Zabol provinces, killing at least 11 rebels in three days of fighting this week.
- According to U.S. and Afghan officials, more than 100 suspected Taliban have been killed as part of a coalition operation called Mountain Viper.

Al Qaeda

- After examining new video and audiotapes broadcasted last week, U.S. intelligence analysts have concluded that al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden is probably ill or injured and could be incapacitated or even dead. Administration officials speaking on the condition of anonymity said that the videotape, which showed bin Laden hiking in the mountains, could have been made as long as two years ago and that an audio track of him was recorded separately, also some time ago, and dubbed into the video.
- Al Qaeda's budget has been cut by at least two-thirds because of U.S. efforts against the terror network and similar organizations, according to the Treasury Department, and more than \$136.7 million worth of assets have been frozen in the United States and overseas so far. According to the department, Osama bin Laden's terror network had an annual budget of about \$35 million before 9/11; today it is \$5 to \$10 million.

To Quote

- *"The intelligence from Bush 1 to Clinton to Bush 2 was consistent in concluding Saddam had chemical and biological weapons and was trying to develop a nuclear capability. And Saddam's expulsion of weapons inspectors and 'the behavior' of his regime 'pointed to a continuing effort' to produce WMD."* – Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY) – *Wall St. Journal/Opinion Journal* – Best of the Web, September 25, 2003.

To Quote

- *"It seems to have become fashionable for some to say that there were no plans for post-war Iraq. These suggestions somehow ignore the fact that, without a plan, we could not have gone from no Iraqis helping us the day Baghdad fell to where more than 60,000 Iraqis are helping us today, as police and other security forces in the field."* – Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz testifying before the HASC, September 25, 2003.